

Sick Men of Europe

extended to non-Germans, as well, what limits could be set on them, where might they not reach? Some kind of sense it had hitherto been possible to make of his fury; now none. Even *Mein Kampf* must be considered obsolete—plan Number One, with Two, Three and Four to follow in rapid succession. Guarantees were hurriedly given to Poland and Roumania, more specific than Czechoslovakia's, intended to be more durable.

Gloom descended, not again to be lifted. Twilight months followed, in which jitterbugs were unrebuked, and recuperative cruises undertaken, if at all, secretly. Idle now to pretend that statesmen might get together round a table, and talk over their differences. Appeasement had gone the way of Collective Security, though one last journey to Italy was undertaken for its sake, Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax conducting amicable conversations with Mussolini, and an Italian lady remarking of the British Premier that his eyes irresistibly reminded her of a grey mountain stream. Whatever hopes this journey raised, were diminished by demands noisily made in Italy shortly before Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax arrived there, for the cession of Corsica, Tunisia, Nice and other French possessions, and quite dashed when Italian troops occupied Albania, they, too, in quest of living space—passo Romano, and now *Lebensraum Romano*.

Appeasement, after its short glory, fell into disfavour; sugar umbrellas vanished from shop windows, and when, at a Foreign Press Association dinner, Mr. Chamberlain included the Munich Agreement in a list of his policy's achievements, he was greeted with silence, embarrassed and embarrassing.

In these twilight months, grey-out preceding
 black-out, events
 were shadowy; individuals concerned in them,
 difficult to discern. Was it Mr. Chamberlain speaking, or Mr.
 Attlee, or Sir
 Archibald Sinclair, or some composite figure—Sir
 Archibald
 Chamberlee. Right Honourable Stalin,
 Honourable and Gallant
 Goering, Learned Friend Goebbels—all was
 confusion. Gas-
 masked faces all were alike; trousered women
 might be men;
 crooner, face spot-lit, voice falsetto, telling of his
 baby, possibly
 female.